

**Massachusetts VAWA STOP Grant
2010-2012 Implementation Plan**

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety & Security
Office of Grants & Research
Justice and Prevention Division**



**Violence Against Women Act
Services*Training*Officers*Prosecutors
Grant Program
2010-2012 Implementation Plan**

February 2011

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I. VAWA STOP Grant Program Overview

The VAWA STOP Grant (STOP Grant) is administered to all states and territories on an annual basis by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), a component of the United States Department of Justice. OVW is responsible for implementing the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and subsequent legislation. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security has received the VAWA STOP Grant since 1994.

The scope of the STOP Grant is to improve the criminal justice system's responses to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking cases as well as develop and strengthen victim services. The grant requires states and territories to fund initiatives that address fourteen statutory purpose areas as outlined in the 2005 Violence Against Women Act. STOP funds must be allocated amongst five categories of funding as follows: 25% to law enforcement, 25% to prosecution, 30% to victim services, 15% discretionary and 5% to court based programs. Additionally, every three years OVW requires each state to submit a three year strategic plan that outlines how STOP funding will be used to enhance its response to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking in accordance with federal legislation.

As has been echoed by a number of Massachusetts (MA) STOP grant funded programs, the VAWA STOP grant is a vital resource that enables both public and private organizations to employ dedicated and well trained staff to help domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking victims navigate the myriad of systems they're likely to engage in as a result of their victimization. For the past 17 years, the MA STOP grant has also supported a variety of specialized and innovative projects that have enhanced our state's victim services, law enforcement, prosecution and court systems' response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking. The priorities set forth in this plan will build upon the infrastructure that has been developed within these systems in an effort to allow for the continued improvement of service delivery to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking.

This document represents the 2010-2012 VAWA STOP Grant Implementation Plan (MA Implementation Plan) for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as required by OVW. It will serve as a framework for how the STOP Grant funds will be used (as per the VAWA 2005 mandates) to improve the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking as well as to increase and enhance services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence over the next three years. It is important to note that the priorities outlined in this plan may be subject to modification resulting from changes in grant funds and conditions set forth in federal awards issued to the Commonwealth during the course of the plan's timeline.

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II. Planning Process for the Massachusetts STOP Implementation Plan

The development of the MA Implementation Plan consisted of three phases over the course of 18 months. The activities within each phase are described below.

Phase 1

1. Implemented a statewide VAWA STOP grant needs assessment, conducted via an online survey that collected baseline of viewpoints from the victim services, criminal justice and judicial systems. Respondents included survivors, advocates, executive directors, lawyers, researchers, administrators and various other subject matter experts in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence (June 2009).

Phase 2

2. Consulted with various stakeholders within domestic and sexual violence service providers, law enforcement, prosecution and the judicial systems. The individual consultations provided an opportunity to identify service needs and gaps within the respective systems; propose recommendations regarding the VAWA STOP plan priorities; and provide ongoing guidance on the development of the MA Implementation Plan (meetings held between October and December 2010).
3. Facilitated focus groups with professionals working with Limited English Proficient victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in both urban and rural regions of our state. Participants included victim advocates, executive directors, program coordinators, family/immigration law attorneys and survivors served by non-profit, community based, and culturally specific organizations including the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence, Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, Refugee Immigrant Assistance Center, Womanshelter/Companeras and Jewish Family Services of Western Mass (May-June 2009 and October 2010).
4. Reviewed various domestic violence and sexual assault specific reports and assessments conducted by state and local agencies specific to Massachusetts (September 1, 2010 to the present).

Phase 3

5. MA Implementation Plan drafted and submitted to the Secretary of Public Safety and Security for review and final recommendations (February 2011).
6. MA Implementation Plan released for public review and comment prior to its submission to OVW (February 2011).

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The activities conducted within each phase ensure that the development of the MA Implementation Plan is reflective of the needs of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking service providers, state and local units of government and most importantly, victims and survivors. Furthermore, the integration of findings from reports and surveys produced by various state and local agencies in respect to domestic violence and sexual assault ensures the priorities outlined in this plan builds upon current service delivery needs and intends to respond to emergent trends developing across the state.

Additionally, participation from non-profit, non-governmental victim service providers, including culturally specific organizations took place in every phase of the plan's development. Their input was both valuable and critical in assuring the needs of survivors were represented and service gaps were identified. Finally, information gleaned from focus groups, needs assessment and informal meetings informed the process of the identification of key goals and objectives to be met with STOP Grant funds over the next three years.

III. The Scope of Domestic and Sexual Violence in Massachusetts

Demographics Overview

According to the 2009 Census data, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is composed of 6,593,587 residents living in 351 cities and towns. The 351 cities and towns vary in population ranging from cities such as Boston, Worcester, and Springfield to small rural towns with only several hundred residents such as Gosnold and Monroe. For the purposes of VAWA STOP administration, the Commonwealth is broken up into five different geographic regions, and each region has both large and small cities and towns. Based on this size diversity, the average number of persons per square mile is 809.8.

Our population is as diverse as the size of our cities and towns. Eighty-six percent of the population is Caucasian, 7.1% is Black or African American, 5.1% is Asian, 8.8% percent is Hispanic or Latino, 12.2% are foreign born, 0.3% is American Indian and 3.7% from another race. English is the predominant language, but 18.7% of the population speaks a language other than English at home. Also, of this population, 51.4% are female and 13.6% are elderly.

Domestic Violence Statistics

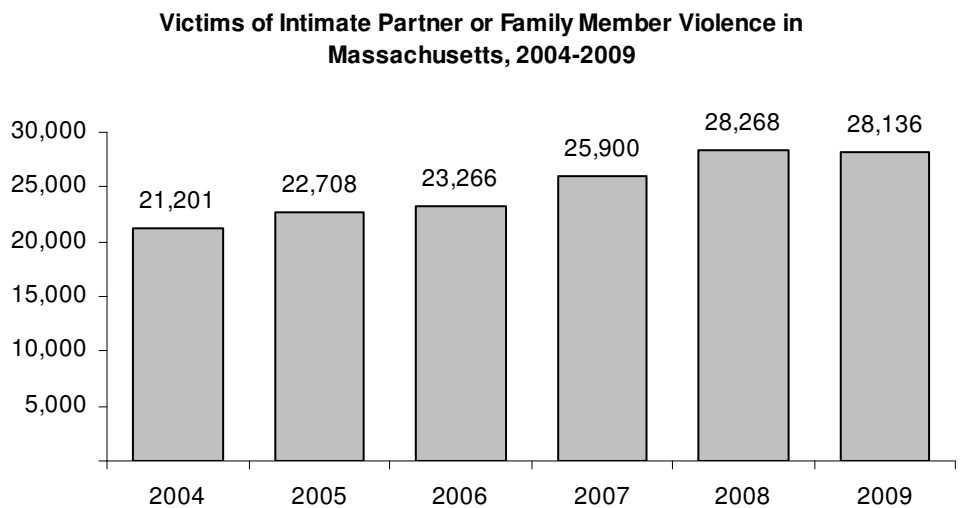
It is important to note that the true scope of domestic violence in Massachusetts cannot be fully measured. This is attributable in large part to the lack of an individual tool or system for tracking all criminal charges specific to domestic violence related incidents resulting in the availability of limited crime data that can accurately reflect the nature and context of domestic violence related incidents in the state. Therefore, for purposes of this report, the statistics contained in this section represent aspects of domestic violence related crime as collected by the following instruments: FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), and quarterly reports submitted by current VAWA STOP funded law enforcement programs.

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The lack of complete crime data is even more evident in communities where large immigrant populations have settled. Victims of refugee and immigrant populations may under-report domestic violence incidents to law enforcement for a variety of reasons (e.g., fear of deportation, cultural beliefs, experience with law enforcement in their native countries). Data specific to cultural communities is further limited resulting in the inability to truly understand the prevalence of sexual and domestic violence within these specific underserved populations.

Crimes Against Persons Involving An Intimate Partner or Family Member

According to data reported by approximately 80% of Massachusetts police departments to NIBRS, from 2004 to 2009 there were a total of 149,479 victims of “crimes against persons” where the victim was an intimate partner or family member.¹ While the number of victims increased 33% from 2004 to 2009, there was a slight decrease in the number of victims (less than 1%) from 2008 to 2009.



Total victims = 149,479

Source: Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit, Extracted 2011.

When broken down by individual “crimes against persons” offense, the data show that from 2004 to 2009 aggravated and simple assaults accounted for 83% of all such offense committed by an intimate partner or family member. Incest, statutory rape, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling accounted for a combined 3% of offenses committed by an intimate partner or family member.

¹ “Crimes against persons” include: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, negligent manslaughter, justifiable homicide, aggravated assault, simple assault, intimidation, kidnapping/abduction, incest, statutory rape, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling.

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Crimes Against Persons Committed by an Intimate Partner or Family Member in Massachusetts by Offense, 2004-2009

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter	15	8	15	36	15	28	117
Negligent Manslaughter	2	4		1			7
Justifiable Homicide							
Kidnapping/Abduction	208	247	227	264	239	280	1,465
Aggravated Assault	4,092	4,535	4,475	4,878	5,193	5,430	28,603
Simple Assault	13,613	14,444	14,560	16,715	18,412	17,984	95,728
Intimidation	2,670	2,856	3,105	3,399	3,658	3,740	19,428
Forcible Rape	300	307	288	309	380	350	1,934
Forcible Sodomy	44	42	29	31	50	42	238
Sexual Assault With An Object	11	7	7	3	2	3	33
Forcible Fondling	154	161	181	202	222	225	1,145
Incest	11	6	8	33	52	58	168
Statutory Rape	185	198	207	173	210	188	1,161

Source: Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit, Extracted 2011.

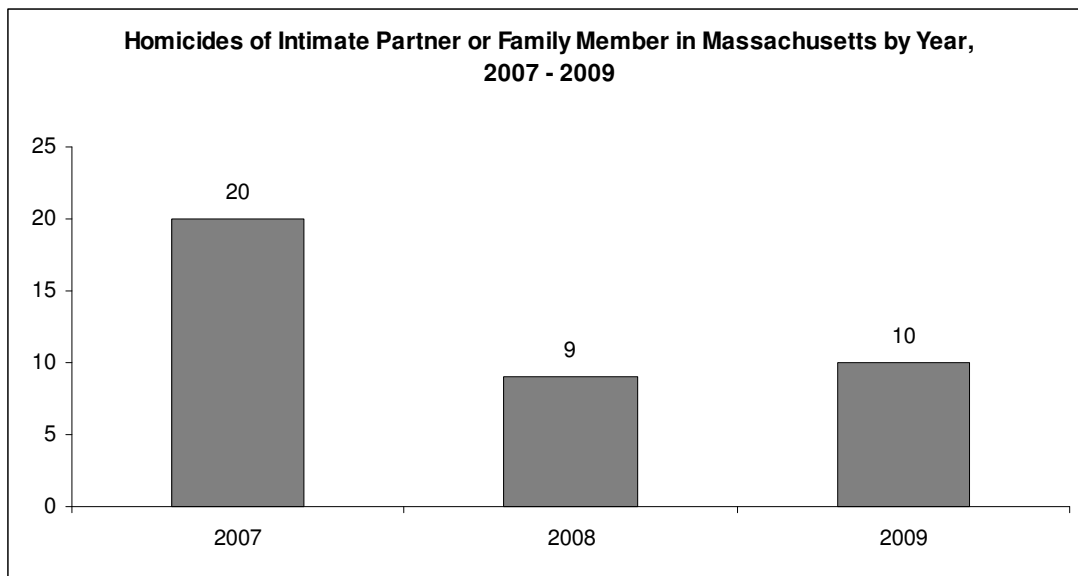
Furthermore, VAWA STOP funded law enforcement agencies, which represent 6% of Massachusetts' police departments, responded to an estimated 32,764 incidents involving domestic violence from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. During that same period, a total of 30,372 restraining orders were issued, domestic violence shelters across the state reported 5,802 women, men and children received emergency shelter and Safelink, the statewide domestic violence hotline, received 31,787 calls. These statistics reveal an increase in intimate partner related crimes and number of people seeking restraining orders, shelter and crisis services since the 2007-2010 MA Implementation Plan was submitted in November 2007.

The increased demand for services coupled with state budget cuts to core domestic violence and sexual assault service providers over the last two state fiscal years has resulted in a growing shortage of shelter beds and core services in our state. The increased demand and strain to service providers was further documented in the fall of 2010, when the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) conducted a one-day census of domestic violence services in Massachusetts in which 100% of domestic violence programs participated. The survey revealed that in one day there were a total of 766 unmet requests for services. Alarming, of these requests, 619 were from victims seeking emergency shelter or transitional housing.

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Domestic Violence Fatalities

According to the Uniform Crime Reports' Supplemental Homicide Reports, between 2007 and 2009, a total of 39 individuals were murdered in Massachusetts in connection with domestic incidents (Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit, Extracted 2011). *The number of individuals murdered in Massachusetts during domestic incidents declined approximately 55% from 2007 to 2008 and increased 11% from 2008 to 2009.* Of the 39 homicides where the victim was an intimate partner or family member, wives were the most common victim (33.3%), followed closely by girlfriends (28.2%).



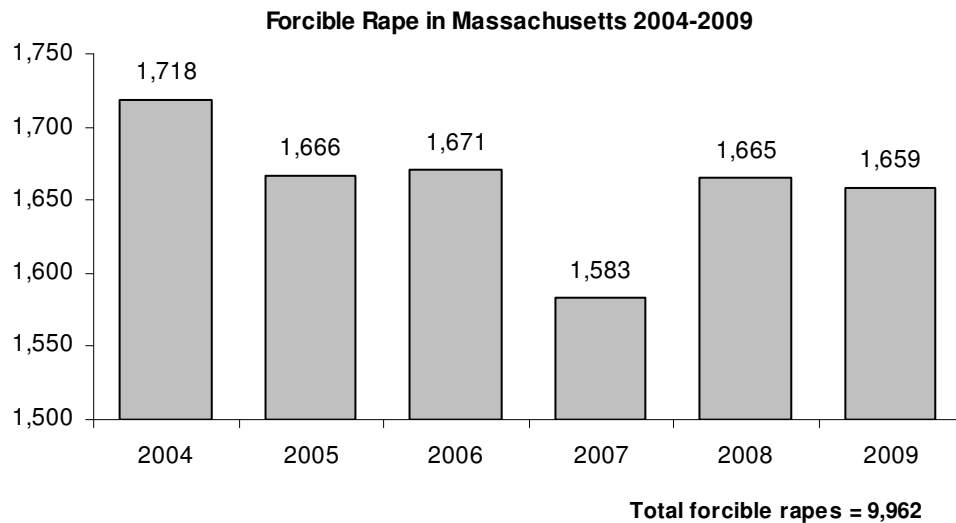
In addition to the UCR homicide data for Massachusetts, Jane Doe, Inc. (the Massachusetts Statewide Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence) tracks fatalities resulting from domestic violence incidents. For calendar year 2009, Jane Doe, Inc. reported that a total of 23 individuals were murdered in 2009 during a domestic violence incident. This number differs from the 2009 UCR statistic since it accounts for additional victim categories such as adults or teens with a child in common and bystanders (including friends, family members, law enforcement officers and/or professionals attempting to assist a victim of domestic violence). As of December 8, 2010, Jane Doe, Inc. reported the number of deaths related to domestic violence totaled 30, representing a 23% increase in fatalities from the previous two years.

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Sexual Violence Statistics

As in domestic violence related incidents, Massachusetts does not have an individual descriptive analysis of the nature or context of sexual victimization. The information below represents aspects of sexual violence related crime data as reported to the FBI's UCR.

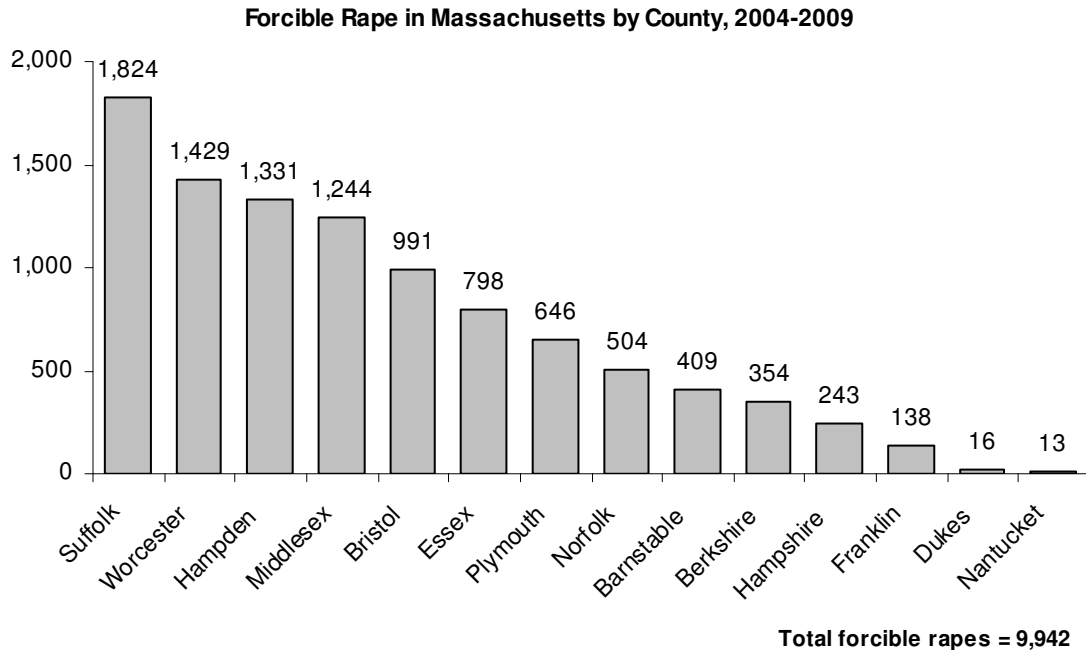
According to UCR data submitted to the Massachusetts State Police, there were a total of 9,962 incidents of forcible rape (which includes both rape by force and attempted rape) from 2004 to 2009. Incidents of forcible rape decreased 3% from 2004 to 2009 and decreased slightly (<1%) from 2008 to 2009.



Source: Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit, Extracted 2011.

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From 2004 to 2009, Suffolk County had the highest number of forcible rapes in Massachusetts, 1,824 (or 18%). Worcester and Hampden Counties had the second and third highest number of forcible rapes, 1,429 (or 14%) and 1,331 (or 13%) respectively. Please note the chart below shows counts of forcible rape in Massachusetts counties and cannot be used to compare rates for counties as it does not control for population.



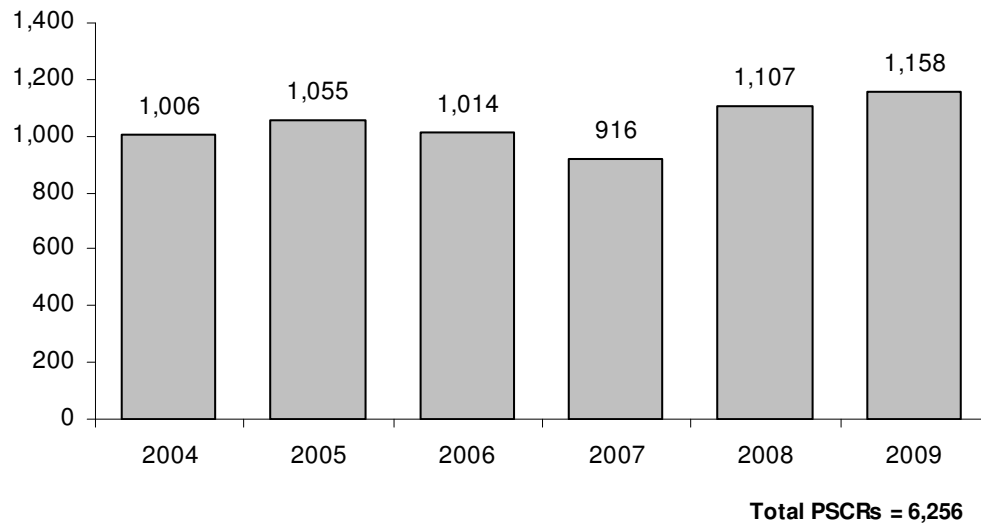
Source: Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit, Extracted 2011.

Beginning in 1999, Massachusetts instituted a separate crime reporting tool (*Massachusetts Provider Sexual Crime Report*) in an effort to capture the nature and characteristics of sexual assault in Massachusetts. The *Massachusetts Provider Sexual Crime Report* was implemented to collect information from victims of sexual assault who seek out medical treatment for sexual assault or rape. Mass General Law c.112 §12 12 1/2 requires medical providers who treat rape or sexual assault victims to report details of the crime to the local law enforcement and to the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security.

According to the Massachusetts Provider Sexual Crime Reports, a total of 6,256 victims sought treatment at a medical facility as a result of a sexual assault from 2004 to 2009. The number of victims seeking medical treatment as a result of sexual assault increased approximately 15% from 2004 to 2009 and increased approximately 5% from 2008 to 2009. Additionally, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health reports that from July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010 a total of 12,950 hotline calls were received by rape crisis centers across the state, representing a 6% increase in calls to the hotline from the previous year.

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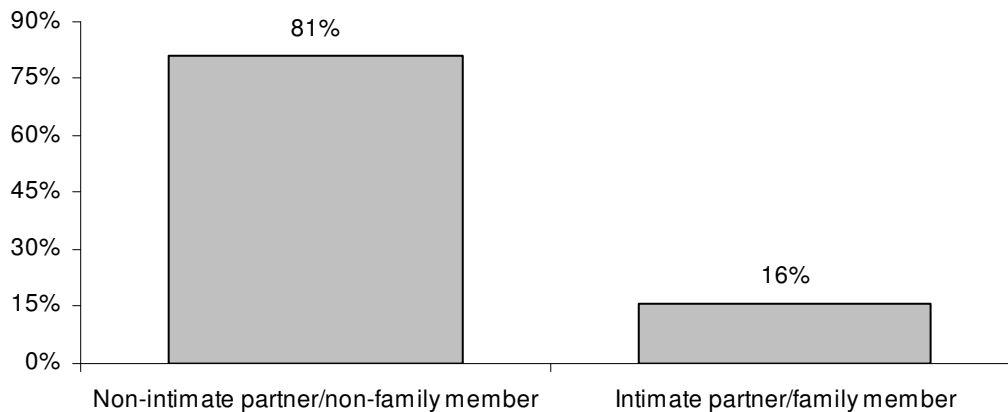
Provider Sexual Crime Reports (PSCR) by Year, 2004-2009



Source: Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, 2011.

The adult Provider Sexual Crime Report form asks victims about their relationship to the assailant(s). Of the 5,641 victims who sought treatment at a medical facility as a result of sexual assault from 2004-2009 (615 pediatric cases were removed from this analysis), 5,463 identified a relationship with the assailant(s).² Sixteen percent of victims indicated the assailant(s) was an intimate partner or family member.

Percentage of PSCRs by Victim-Offender Relationship, 2004-2009



*Percentages do not total 100% due to multiple responses and cases where the victim-offender relationship was missing

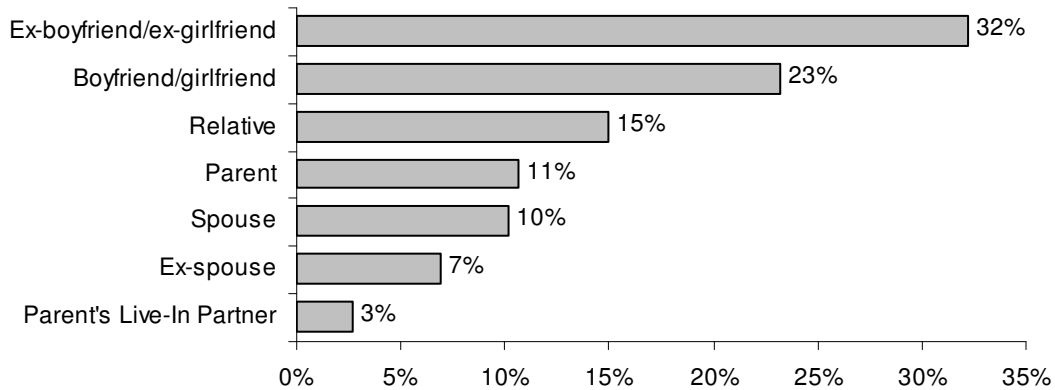
Source: Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, 2011.

² The 615 pediatric PSCRs were not included in the analysis because questions regarding victim-assailant relationship are not included on the form.

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Of the 882 victims who identified their assailant(s) as an intimate partner or family member, ex-boyfriend/ex-girlfriend was the mostly commonly indicated relationship type (32%). The second most common relationship type was boyfriend/girlfriend (23%).

**Percentage of PSCRs by Intimate Partner/Family Member
Victim-Offender Relationships, 2004-2009**



*Percentages total more than 100% due to multiple responses

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IV. Key Findings from Assessments of Domestic and Sexual Assault Related Services

A number of assessments, surveys and reports developed and/or published by organizations that fund and/or provide direct services to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence victims were reviewed and analyzed for purposes of developing this plan. They included, but were not limited to, reports published by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security; the Executive Office of Health and Human Services; the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance; and Jane Doe, Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence. Based on these reports and consultations with experts in the victim service, public safety and public health systems, below is a list of service needs and gaps in respect to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence in the Commonwealth.

- a. Shelter beds and services for domestic violence victims;
- b. Shelter beds and services for sexual assault victims;
- c. Shelter and community based services for elder victims of domestic and sexual violence;
- d. Affordable housing for domestic violence and sexual assault victims;
- e. Legal representation for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault (particularly for refugee and immigrant victims);
- f. Linguistic and culturally appropriate services for Limited English Proficient victims of domestic violence and sexual assault within shelters, community-based programs and the criminal justice system;
- g. Trauma sensitive services for victims with mental health and/or substance abuse;
- h. Accessible services (physical, cultural, audio/visual) for deaf victims and victims with disabilities;
- i. Services for children impacted by sexual and/or domestic violence;
- j. Adequate transportation services in rural areas;
- k. Teen dating violence prevention and intervention services;
- l. Services for victims that identify as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer.
- m. Training of law enforcement on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence;
- n. Training of judiciary, probation, and court personnel on domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Information gleaned from focus groups conducted during Phase II of this plan also revealed that there is an increased demand for services to address the needs of undocumented, sexually exploited, trafficked and/or prostituted victims. Additionally, programs stated that a growing number of populations immigrating from Africa, in particular the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Caribbean, Middle-East and Latin America are presenting with trauma related service needs resulting from intimate partner, warfare and other forms of violence experienced in their native countries. The MA Implementation Plan took into consideration these findings in developing goals and objectives that will allow for the establishment, enhancement and/or continuation of programs to respond to these needs.

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V. Massachusetts 2010-2012 STOP Grant Implementation Plan Priorities

PART ONE: Goals and Objectives for the Massachusetts VAWA STOP Grant Program by Category of Funding

A. *Courts Category*

Goal 1: Improve the Court's response to domestic and dating violence.

Objectives:

- 1(a). Provide funding to the Administrative Office of the Trial Court (AOTC) to support the VAWA STOP project coordinator position.
- 1(b). Enhance the Court's proficiency to respond to domestic violence cases by implementing trainings of the judiciary, court and probation personnel on topics such as identification of high risk cases, improving abuse prevention order proceedings and certified batterer intervention program referrals.
- 1(c). Conduct an assessment of domestic violence proceedings in both the civil and criminal courts to improve case outcomes and victim experiences within each of the respective court processes.
- 1(d). Improve court-based services for Limited English Proficient populations by training court interpreters on the dynamics of domestic violence and translating court related documents into various languages.
- 1(e). Expand capacity to provide training of court staff including the judiciary, probation and other appropriate personnel on domestic violence, stalking and dating violence utilizing both adult and distance learning training modules.

Goal 2: Improve the Court's response to sexual assault.

Objectives:

- 2(a). Provide capacity for AOTC to support the VAWA STOP project coordinator position.
- 2(b). Enhance the Court's proficiency in the handling of sexual assault and stalking cases by implementing trainings of judiciary, probation and court personnel on topics such as the M.G.L. 258(e) Harassment Prevention Law, the Court's response to prostitution and sex offender management.

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- 2(c). Improve court-based services for Limited English Proficient populations by training court interpreters on the dynamics of sexual assault and translating court related documents into various languages.
- 2(d). Expand capacity to provide multi-disciplinary training of court staff including the judiciary, probation and other appropriate personnel on sexual violence utilizing both adult and distance learning training modules.

Tasks and activities in relation to Goals 1 & 2:

- The VAWA STOP Grant currently provides funding for objectives 1(a),(b), 2(a), and 2(b);
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit a proposal that addresses these goals and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant intends to provide funding for Goals 1 and 2 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

B. Law Enforcement Category

Goal 3: Expand police departments' capacity to respond to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

Objectives:

- 3(a). Provide funding to police departments for hiring/employing of specially trained civilian advocates to work directly with victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking.
- 3(b). Provide funding to police departments to support detectives and/or investigators to conduct follow-up investigations of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and/or dating violence cases.
- 3(c). Provide funding to police department' to allow officers to participate in high risk response, sexual assault response and/or sex offender management teams in coordination with a community-based sexual and/or domestic violence service provider and/or district attorney office.
- 3(d). Provide funding to support training of law enforcement personnel in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and/or stalking in collaboration with a community-based domestic or sexual violence service provider.

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Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 3:

- Objective 3(a) is presently being supported with VAWA STOP Grant funds;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals that address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 3 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

C. Victim Service Category

Goal 4: Enhance services to underserved and/or marginalized victims of domestic violence, dating violence and/or stalking.

Objectives:

- 4(a). Provide funding to domestic violence service providers to address the needs of, but not limited to, homeless, elderly, mentally ill, substance abusing, prostituted, undocumented, trafficked, Limited English Proficient, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender, adolescent, Deaf, and disabled victims.
- 4(b). Provide funding to support programs that provide services for incarcerated female victims of domestic violence.
- 4(c). Provide funding to domestic violence service providers to develop and/or participate in high risk response team(s) in coordination with law enforcement and/or district attorney office.

Goal 5: Enhance services to underserved and/or marginalized victims of sexual assault and/or stalking.

Objectives:

- 5(a). Provide funding to sexual assault service providers to address the needs of but not limited to, homeless, elderly, mentally ill, substance abusing, prostituted, undocumented, trafficked, Limited English Proficient, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender, adolescent, Deaf, and disabled victims.
- 5(b). Provide funding to support programs that provide services for incarcerated female victims of sexual assault.
- 5(c). Provide funding to sexual assault service providers to develop and/or participate in sexual assault response teams in coordination with a law enforcement and/or District Attorneys' Offices.

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Tasks and activities in relation to Goals 4 and 5:

- The VAWA STOP Grant currently provides funding for objectives 4(a), (b), (c), 5(a), and (b);
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals that address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goals 4 and 5 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

Goal 6: Improve linguistic and culturally appropriate services for Limited English Proficient victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.³

Objectives:

- 6(a). Provide funding to select culturally specific community based programs to respond to the needs of Limited English Proficient victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.
- 6(b). Provide funding to select culturally specific community based programs to collaborate with domestic and/or sexual violence service providers , with a history of providing services to sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking victims in developing its capacity to provide services to Limited English Proficient victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 6:

- The VAWA STOP Grant currently provides funding for the above goal and objectives;
- 10% of the Victim Service category funds will be set-aside to support projects selected to implement the above stated initiatives;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals to address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 6 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

³ The 2005 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act requires states to set-aside 10 % of funds within the Victim Service category for culturally specific community based organizations providing services to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking victims.

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Goal 7: Improve advocacy services available to victims seeking protection through the court system.

Objective:

- 7(a). Provide funding to the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance to support the SAFEPLAN programs which funds victim service agencies to hire and/or employ specially trained advocates to assist domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking victims who seek assistance through the judicial system.

Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 7:

- The VAWA STOP Grant currently provides funding for this goal and related objective;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals to addresses this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 7 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

D. Discretionary Category

Goal 8: Develop a better understanding of fatalities related to domestic violence, including murder-suicides and familicides.

Objectives:

- 8(a). Provide funding to support the continued monitoring and assessment of domestic violence related fatalities.
- 8(b). Provide funding to support the implementation of policy recommendations developed as a result of past and future fatality review assessments.
- 8(c). Provide funding to support initiatives that foster collaborations with necessary stakeholders such as prosecution, law enforcement, victim service programs, mental health, suicide prevention programs, and the media in the dissemination, education and training for the prevention of domestic violence homicides.

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Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 8:

- The VAWA STOP Grant currently provides funding for this goal and related objectives;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals to address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 8 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

Goal 9: Improve capacity building and sustainability of domestic violence and sexual assault programs.

Objective:

- 9(a). Provide funding to support general and intensive technical assistance, leadership training, capacity building, resources and information to organizations that provide services to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence victims.

Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 9:

- The VAWA STOP Grant currently provides funding for this goal and related objective;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals to address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 9 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

Goal 10: Enhancement of quality forensic medical services for victims of sexual assault across the state.

Objectives:

- 10(a). Provide funding to the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance to support the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program's ability to provide forensic nursing in designated SANE sites.
- 10(b). Provide funding to support current, effective and victim-centered training of sexual assault nurse examiners to enhance forensic nursing within designated SANE sites.

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Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 10:

- The VAWA STOP Grant currently provides funding for this goal and related objectives;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals to address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 10 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

E. Prosecution Category

Goal 11: Develop specialized prosecution teams to handle domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and stalking cases.

Objectives:

- 11(a). Provide funding to district attorneys' offices to support the hiring and/or employing of specialized victim witness advocate(s) and/or prosecutor(s) dedicated to handling domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking cases.
- 11(b). Provide funding to district attorneys' offices to better respond to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking through specialized trainings, community-wide events and/or system improvements.
- 11(c). Provide funding to district attorneys' offices to develop and/or participate in high risk teams, sexual assault response and/or sex offender management teams in coordination with a local victim service program and/or law enforcement agency.

Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 11:

- Objective 11(a) is presently being supported with VAWA STOP Grant funds;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals to address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 11 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

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Goal 12: Enhance the training of prosecutors and victim witness advocates handling domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking cases.

Objectives:

- 12(a). Provide funding to the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association to support the continued development and implementation of the *Prosecutors Training Institute*.
- 12(b). Provide funding to the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association to design and implement trainings and develop resources, materials and manuals for prosecutors, victim witness advocates, and criminal justice personnel, as well as disseminate pertinent information such as court decisions, case law summaries and legal updates.

Tasks and activities in relation to Goal 12:

- The above stated goal and objectives is currently being implemented by the VAWA STOP Grant;
- In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) which will solicit proposals to address this goal and related objectives; and
- The VAWA STOP Grant will provide funding for Goal 12 throughout the course of this plan's timeline.

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PART TWO: VAWA STOP Grant Statutory Purpose Areas

The priorities set forth in the 2010-2012 MA Implementation Plan will address the VAWA 2005 statutory program purpose areas as required by the Office on Violence Against Women as outlined below.

VAWA 2005 Purpose Areas	MA STOP Plan Goal	Project types
Training law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors to more effectively identify and respond to violent crime against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence and dating violence.	Goal 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 12	Judiciary, court and probation personnel training, law enforcement training, civilian police advocate training, prosecutor training, criminal justice and victim service advocate trainings.
Developing, training or expanding units of law enforcement officers, judges, court personnel and prosecutors specifically targeting violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault and domestic violence.	Goal 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12	Employing/maintaining civilian police advocates, domestic violence/sexual assault investigators, specially trained prosecutors, victim witness advocates, sexual assault nurse examiners and a program coordinator within the Trial Court system.
Developing and implementing more effective police, court and prosecution policies, protocols, orders and services specifically devoted to preventing; identifying, and responding to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault and domestic violence.	Goal 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12	Judiciary and court personnel trainings, updating/translating of court documents, law enforcement and civilian police advocacy trainings, prosecutor and victim-witness advocate trainings, development of judicial bench books, law enforcement training curricula.

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Developing, enlarging, or strengthening victim services programs, including sexual assault, domestic violence dating violence, stalking programs developing or improving delivery of victim services to underserved populations, providing specialized domestic violence court advocates in courts where a significant number of protection orders are granted, and increasing reporting and reducing attrition rates for cases involving violent crimes against women, including crimes of sexual assault and domestic violence.	Goal 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Culturally specific services for Limited English Proficient populations, crisis and intervention services, education, outreach and training initiatives, legal services, mental health/ substance abuse treatment services, individual and group counseling services, court-based civilian advocates, specially trained prosecutors, victim witness advocates and sexual assault nurse examiners.
Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing stalking.	Goal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12	Training of judiciary, probation and court personnel, civilian police advocate programs, court-based advocates, law enforcement training, prosecutor and victim-witness advocate training, domestic violence advocates services and training.
Training of sexual assault forensic medical personnel examiners in the collection and preservation of evidence, analysis, prevention, and providing expert testimony and treatment of trauma related to sexual assault.	Goal 10	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner training and forensic services.
Providing assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in immigration matters.	Goal 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11	Employing and/or maintaining bi-lingual, bi-cultural advocates, supporting culturally-specific services, education, outreach and training initiatives, court-based civilian advocates, specially trained prosecutors and victim-witness advocates.

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Maintaining core victim services and criminal justice initiatives, while supporting complementary new initiatives and emergency services for victims and their families.	Goal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Domestic and sexual violence advocate positions, legal services, training and education initiatives, fatality assessments, technical assistance and capacity building projects, judicial and law enforcement policy development and implementation.
Supporting the placement of special victim assistants in local law enforcement agencies to serve as liaisons between victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking and personnel in local law enforcement agencies in order to improve the enforcement of protection orders.	Goal 3	Civilian police advocacy programs.

PART THREE: General Description of the Types of Projects Proposed by Category of Funding

Courts Category

The VAWA STOP grant will be used to support the STOP Grant Coordinator position within the Administrative Office of the Trial Court (AOTC). This position will be responsible for implementing Goals 1 and 2 outlined in the Courts section of this plan in coordination with the Massachusetts Judicial Training Institute, District, and Juvenile, Family and Probate Court as well as the Office of the Court Interpreter Services. The types of projects that will be supported within this category include the following: enhanced training of judges and court personnel utilizing various training styles such as workshop and distance learning, translation of various domestic violence sexual assault, stalking and harassment related court documents into languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, Cape Verdean, Kriulo, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Khmer, Russian, and Chinese and participation in a number of committees both within AOTC and with collaborating partners such as community-based domestic violence/sexual assault service providers, probation, prosecution, law enforcement and other key stakeholders during the implementation of these goals.

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Law Enforcement Category

The VAWA STOP grant will be used to support the hiring and/or employing of civilian victim advocates within law enforcement departments in various geographic locations across the state as well as support the development and/or participation of law enforcement personnel in high risk/sexual assault response and/or sex offender management teams. This section also includes a new priority that was not available in past implementation plans.

Many police departments are experiencing a reduction in capacity to conduct thorough domestic and sexual assault investigations resulting from the recent economic downturn. This comes at a time when departments across the state are reporting a rise in both the number and severity of domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Therefore, the 2011 VAWA STOP competitive cycle will allow law enforcement agencies to apply for funding to cover over-time costs for investigators and detectives to investigate domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence cases.

VAWA STOP funds will also be used to supplement recruit, veteran officer, sexual and domestic violence investigators basic trainings offered within the Commonwealth's police training academies. The training topics may include dangerousness assessment, strangulation, best practices in responding to sexual and domestic violence involving underserved populations and advanced investigative skills training in sexual and domestic violence cases. All programs funded in this category will be required to consult with a victim service provider in the development and implementation of their proposed activities.

Victim Service Category

The VAWA STOP grant will be used to maintain and/or enhance core domestic and sexual violence services across the state as well as expand upon programs and/or services currently supported by state appropriations and federal grant programs such as the Victims of Crime Act, Family Violence Prevention and Services Administration, Sexual Assault Services Program, Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, Rape Prevention Education, Edward J. Memorial Byrne/Justice Assistance Grants and/or private foundations. Programs and services for underserved and/or marginalized populations such as the elderly, Limited English Proficient, mental health, substance abusing, trafficked, undocumented and adolescent victims continue to be enhanced by the MA STOP grant's ability to fund projects that are designed to respond to the unique needs presented by these populations.

The types of projects to be funded in this category will include bi-lingual, bi-cultural advocacy services, hotline and crisis intervention, legal services, civil and legal advocacy, support groups, mental health and substance counseling, training, education, outreach and collaborative projects in coordination with traditional partners such as law enforcement, certified batter intervention programs, medical institutions and non-traditional including faith based organizations and council on aging groups. All the organizations funded within this category will be required to demonstrate their capacity and proficiency in developing programs that improve service delivery to the underserved populations identified in Goals 4 and 5.

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Discretionary Category

VAWA STOP grant funds within this category will be used to supplement the victim service category of funding of direct service type projects as well as support select special initiatives that inform best practices in domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking service delivery and system response. The types of projects that may be supported in this category include enhanced forensic medical services for victims of sexual assault, continued assessment and implementation of findings in relation to domestic violence related fatalities, technical assistance and capacity building of local domestic violence and sexual assault programs, and development of high risk and sexual assault response teams across the Commonwealth.

Prosecution Category

The VAWA STOP grant will support the hiring and employing of specially trained prosecutors and victim witness advocates to handle domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual assault cases. All District Attorneys' Offices receiving VAWA STOP funds will be required to utilize the *Massachusetts Prosecutors Manual: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault*, Third Edition (2007) and *Victim-Witness Advocate Manual*, Second Edition (2010). Agencies funded in this category will also be encouraged to adopt a vertical prosecution team model in prosecuting domestic violence and sexual assault cases and will be required to consult with a domestic or sexual violence service provider in the development and implementation of their proposed activities. Furthermore, District Attorneys' Offices will be able to apply for the development or participation in a high risk and/or sexual assault response team as well as projects that enhance the district attorney's ability to handle sexual assault and/or domestic violence cases.

The VAWA STOP funds will also continue to support the Statewide Prosecutors' and Victim Witness Advocates' Training Institute. The Training Institute will provide in-depth training on various topics pertaining to the handling and prosecuting of domestic violence and sexual assault related cases such as domestic violence 101 for new prosecutors, advanced evidence skills training, sexually dangerous persons training for criminal justice professionals, digital evidence training and annual victim witness advocate and prosecutor's conference.

PART FOUR: 2010-2012 MA Implementation Plan's Relation to Prior MA STOP Plan Priorities

Direct Services

The 2007-2010 MA Implementation Plan supported core services and fostered the development of specialized domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking service delivery across various systems and across the state. Due to the difficult economic climate in our state, the priorities outlined in this plan will allow for moderate sustainability of the specialized services to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking victims of underserved populations seeking assistance within law enforcement, victim services, prosecution and court based programs.

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This plan hopes to also continue to build upon the existing network of both federal, state and privately funded services while allowing for the development of a small number of new initiatives that address gaps in services and emerging issues such as an increase in domestic violence related fatalities, culturally appropriate services for refugee populations and other issues impacting domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking victims.

As in the 2007-2010 MA Implementation Plan, this plan will also continue to support programs that commit to collaborating with traditional and non-traditional community based partners that include faith-based organizations, certified batterer intervention programs, elder protection agencies and educational institutions in developing and implementing their project goals and objectives. Sub-grantees will be required to meet this criteria and document the collaborations with the submission of a memorandum of agreement and/or letters of support from at least three collaborating partners.

Finally, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security will continue to coordinate quarterly meetings with state agencies (state funders group) that support domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking services and programs through state and local funding in an effort to improve coordination of victim services across the state. The mission of the state funders group is to continually assess the distribution of state and federal funding to avoid duplication of services, identification of gaps, provide technical assistance and work with Jane Doe, Inc. in responding to programs struggling with organizational, service delivery and/or capacity issues across the state.

Training Initiatives

As a result of reduced federal, state and local funding and attrition within victim services, law enforcement, courts and prosecution agencies, there continues to be a demand for ongoing outreach and training within these disciplines. The continued support of training projects will allow victim services, law enforcement, prosecution and court personnel the ability to receive cutting edge, multi-disciplinary, best practices trainings to help improve their response to the growing and complex needs presented by domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence victims accessing their systems. The goals and objectives outlined in this plan that allow for training, education and outreach based initiatives will build upon the expertise of VAWA funded personnel, trainers, materials and curricula developed during the 2007-2010 MA Implementation Plan period. Training topics such as the integration of domestic violence prevention and awareness, lethality assessment, cultural competency and trauma informed service delivery will continue to be offered throughout the course of this plan.

Furthermore, the ability to support education, training and outreach initiatives will allow programs to expand their capacity to reach victims that may not be accessing their services but rather neighboring organizations and collaborating partners. Finally, the VAWA STOP funding of training and education supports a scope of services that is prohibited or limited by other funding streams.

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VI. Overview of the Massachusetts STOP Grant Competitive Process

Competitive Grant Process

The Massachusetts VAWA STOP grant program releases a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) every three years. The last competitive AGF was released in May 2008 and resulted in the funding of 56 programs across the five category types.

Prior to the release of the May 2008 competitive AGF, informational sessions were conducted across the state. The sessions allowed interested organizations to participate, including former and current funded agencies, culturally specific organizations and organizations that had never applied to the VAWA STOP. The sessions provided information about the MA VAWA STOP grant program, federal and state application requirements and a question and answer session. The forums were held in four locations and solicited interest from organizations providing services in very remote, rural and urban parts of the state. Resources on how to develop a strong grant application, identifying research and promising practices and links to grant writing workshops were also made available to all who attended.

In May 2011, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security intends to release a competitive AGF. The VAWA STOP Grant program will once again sponsor informational sessions prior to the release of the competitive AGF in an effort to inform existing grantees and interested organizations about the VAWA STOP Grant program. Additionally, the MA STOP program will work closely with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Refugee Immigrant Services and Empowerment program and Jane Doe, Inc., to reach culturally specific organizations and provide detailed information regarding their eligibility to apply and receive funding as mandated by the VAWA 2005 10% set-aside.

Distribution of Funding

The MA VAWA STOP Grant Program will take into account the following criteria in distributing funds across the various geographic locations of our state:

1. State and local domestic violence and sexual assault crime data (where available);
2. Size of the target population to be served;
3. Demographics of the target population;
4. Geographic area served by the applicant (rural or urban);
5. Number of victim services programs within the caption area to be served;
6. Existence of similar services within the caption area to be served;
7. Distribution of other domestic violence and sexual assault related state and federal funded services in proposed region;
8. Amount requested and availability of funds within each category.

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Awards will be made in a format that ensures equitable distribution of VAWA STOP funds across the state. Additionally, we intend to consult with the agencies such as the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Department of Children and Families and the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance that also fund domestic violence and sexual assault services when determining projects for funding to prevent duplication of funding and/or creation of gaps in services within regions and/or victim populations.

MA VAWA STOP Grant Award Process

The awarding of MA VAWA STOP Grant funds for initiatives proposed in this plan will be based on mandates set by the 2005 Violence Against Women Act. In May 2011, a competitive Availability of Grant Funds (2011 AGF) will be released to eligible entities that have the expertise and capacity to service victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking within law enforcement, prosecution, and court and victim service based organizations. The AGF will require applicants to submit proposals that contain a project narrative, goals and objectives, measurement of progress and letter of intent or memorandum of agreement to help guide the proposal review and award process.

Proposals considered for funding will be based on how the applicant meets the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated need for proposed services;
2. Size of target population and/or region to be served;
3. Demographic characteristics of the target population to be served (if available);
4. Capacity of applicant to implement proposed program;
5. Soundness of proposed initiative;
6. History of providing services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking;
7. Number of domestic violence/sexual assault incidents/victims responded to or served within a one year period;
8. Coordination of services and collaboration with key partners within the community.

Grant proposals will be assessed based on eligibility requirements, purpose areas and qualifications required by the category of funding (e.g. law enforcement, prosecution, courts, victim services and discretionary). Subject matter experts in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking will be recruited to review and score each proposal. Finally, proposals selected for funding will be awarded a three year contract to support and develop the proposed program initiatives.

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Estimated Timeline	Proposed Activities
October 1, 2010- September 30, 2011	VAWA STOP FFY10 grant funds distributed to current sub-grantees for a third and final year of funding.
May 2011	Competitive AGF released soliciting proposals Of current and new applicants from law enforcement, prosecution, court, state agencies and victim service organizations who have at least seven years experience working with domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence victims.
July-August 2011	AGF responses due to EOPSS. Responses reviewed and scored by teams of three. Award recommendations submitted to Secretary of Public Safety and Security for review and approval. Award notifications issued in September 2011.
October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2014	FFY11-FFY13 VAWA STOP grant contract period.

Once contracts have been executed, sub-grantees will be required to submit an annual non-competitive request for funding along with an updated proposal reflecting the project's progress. Funding within the three year contract period will be based on sub-grantees adherence to the project's goals and objectives, federal and state financial and reporting requirements as well as availability of federal funds.

VII. Responding to the Needs of Underserved Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

The Massachusetts VAWA STOP Grant program has historically structured its competitive AGF to solicit proposals from qualified organizations that address the needs of underserved populations identified in Sections 4 and 5. The underserved populations for purposes of the VAWA STOP grant continue to be identified in consultation with leaders and subject matter experts within the victim service, law enforcement, prosecution and court systems and corroborated by surveys, focus groups and needs assessments of service providers, victims and survivors.

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Additionally, in order to successfully fulfill the VAWA 2005 10% set-aside funding mandate for culturally specific community based organizations, the VAWA STOP Grant Administrator worked closely with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Refugee Immigrant Services and Empowerment (RISE) program and Jane Doe, Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence in the development of the 2008 AGF and will continue to work with these entities in designing the 2011 AGF so that it includes the necessary purpose areas to address the unique needs of culturally specific communities and that culturally specific organizations are eligible and equipped to submit proposals to implement these projects. A successful outcome of this inter-agency collaboration resulted in the RISE program connecting the Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center (RIAC), a culturally specific organization serving Muslim women, to the 2008 VAWA STOP grant competitive grant process. RIAC submitted a proposal and received its first ever VAWA STOP grant in September 2008. This also resulted in the MAVAWA STOP grant program exceeding the VAWA culturally specific community based programs funding mandate.

Additionally, as described in Section VI, prior to the release of the 2011 competitive Availability of Grant Funds, regional informational sessions will be offered to victim-service, law enforcement and prosecution based organizations. The sessions will provide an opportunity for programs to become better acquainted with the VAWA STOP program financial and programmatic requirements, currently funded initiatives in each region, competitive grant process, and obtain individual assistance from the VAWA grant manager and administrator prior to the release of the competitive AGF.

The competitive solicitation will be posted to a number of list-serves that include state agencies, both mainstream and culturally specific community-based organizations, local domestic violence and sexual assault service providers, law enforcement, judiciary, prosecutor, county sheriff and other criminal justice organizations. Additionally, the grant administrator will solicit the assistance of advisors to the VAWA STOP Grant program in disseminating the AGF within their respective networks in an effort to reach as many organizations and systems serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking.

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VIII. Potential Barriers to Implementing the 2010-2012 Massachusetts VAWA STOP Plan Priorities

As of the date of this plan, victim service, law enforcement, prosecution and court based agencies continue to experience agency-wide reductions in both state and federal funding. This has resulted in staff lay-offs, including specially trained and seasoned personnel, and reduced capacity to provide services to the populations they're mandated to serve. As a result, potential barriers to fully implementing the priorities outlined in the VAWA STOP categories may include the need to fund eligible organizations that have experienced reductions so they can continue to serve both mainstream and underserved domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence victims, and supporting fewer new projects or projects that enhance or expand current service delivery. Additionally, given the reduction of staffing and increased case loads, particularly in the prosecution and law enforcement systems, participation in VAWA funded trainings may be impacted. Therefore, it is unclear whether the training, education and outreach activities that may typically be implemented in Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 4, 5, 6, 8,9 and 11 will be supported during the course of this plan's timeline.

Additionally, victim service providers have reported difficulty in providing services solely to the underserved populations identified in their proposals due to increased demand for services by victims of all backgrounds and service needs. This has resulted in an increase in both the amount and types of victims typically served by VAWA STOP funded personnel and has challenged providers' ability to adequately meet the needs sought by their clients. Therefore, we may likely see a large percentage of VAWA STOP funds being used to support direct services in an effort to assist service providers in meeting the basic needs presented by both marginalized and mainstream victims.

Grant Adherence and Sustainability

If victim services organizations, court, police and prosecution agencies continue to receive reductions in federal, state and private funding, the above stated barriers may contribute to a revision of the plan's goals and objectives in 2012 and 2013, particularly within the Law Enforcement and Prosecution categories. We also anticipate that it may become difficult for police and District Attorneys' Offices to fully implement their VAWA funded projects as well as the meet the financial and programmatic reporting requirements. We hope to address some of these potential barriers by working with Jane Doe, Inc., the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association and state agencies such as the Department of Children and Families, Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance to provide technical assistance and support victim services programs, police and District Attorneys' Offices to find creative ways to maximize their agency capacity during tight fiscal times and seek out alternative funding sources.

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IX. Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects Funded by the Massachusetts STOP Grant

All sub-grantees funded by the MA VAWA STOP Grant are subject to close monitoring by the VAWA STOP Grant Manager and Administrator. The activities below conducted annually to ensure grant compliance.

1. Submission of quarterly progress and financial reports throughout the sub-grantee three year contract period.
2. Submission of an Annual Progress Report that reflects the services and number of victims served by the VAWA STOP Grant in a calendar year.
3. Participation in site visit and/or desk reviews during the course of the sub-grantee's three year contract. The desk and site visits allow for the grant manager to closely monitor the sub-grantee's progress in meeting their goals and objectives and address areas of need or concern in respect to the VAWA STOP funded initiative and grant adherence.
4. Submission of an annual request for funding of the sub-grantee's project through a non-competitive process in years 2 and 3 of their contract period. The annual non-competitive request for funding requires programs to demonstrate their project's progress and how their proposed initiatives will build upon previous accomplishments. Resources on how to develop and maintain performance measures are provided to help programs monitor their project's success. Further resources and guidance regarding programmatic evaluation is provided at the annual Technical Assistance Workshop referred to in bullet #5.
5. Participation in an annual Technical Assistance Training Workshop (TA Workshop) which provides an opportunity for all VAWA STOP grant funded programs to network, exchange best practices, identify issues and concerns and discuss possible solutions. The TA workshop is held each October. This mandatory meeting also informs sub-grantees about the financial and programmatic grant requirements, attend workshops on best practices in domestic and sexual assault response, learn about VAWA STOP funded projects and strengthen collaborations with programs across various disciplines in their respective regions.

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X. Conclusion

The 2010-2012 MA Implementation Plan aims to address and improve services for domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence victims across the state. The key focus for this plan will be to build upon the existing infrastructure created by the past 17 years of VAWA STOP programming while allowing for a small number of new initiatives that address gaps and emerging needs.

This plan will serve as a tool for the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, advisors to the VAWA STOP grant program and many other organizations committed to utilizing Office on Violence Against Women grant funds to serve victims. *The ultimate goal of this plan is that within the next three years, Massachusetts will have stronger criminal justice and victim service systems committed to providing victim-centered, culturally sensitive responses to those victimized by domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence.*

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